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**To:** 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'  
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**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

As an Information Technology professional with several years of experience, I watched and read the news about the Microsoft trial with great anxiety. I know full well that if handled improperly the situation would destroy an existent company (Microsoft) for no reason, while at the same time elevating competitors for no reason as well.

Microsoft is like no other company in the history of the world. To liken it to pre-antitrust AT&T, Standard Oil, Alcoa, etc. is a gross underestimation of Microsoft's importance and would do great injustice.

I will freely admit that some actions taken by Microsoft have been potentially anticompetitive; however, if you examine the track records of the competition you will find them in a more stable environment now than the time before Microsoft's improper activities. Without exception, all the competition has benefited from the current situation, and the topic of harm to the consumer is nothing more than a smoke-screen.

Look at what Microsoft has done with the Windows Operating System. It has brought the Internet to the masses in an easily understandable form, it has "leveled the playing field" for software developers and the home user, it has brought into play an entire industry that was non-existent prior to Windows 95 being made available for sale.

Certainly, Microsoft has benefited, as is to be expected. But to claim that the consumer has been unduly harmed is foolish and outright wrong.

If Microsoft is to be punished, let the punishment fit the crime. Dissolution is inappropriate, only a fine would be sufficient. A monetary penalty is the only correct solution. This coupled with a probationary oversight on business practices would definitely hinder Microsoft's alleged illegal business practices and would allow the US to recoup any losses from the investigation and would allow for a fostering of the market system to flourish.

I would remind you that Windows is dominant in the marketplace, and to damage that would create undue chaos. It is safer, and wiser, for Microsoft to remain a single unit and to be penalized via monetary fine rather than to take action that in less than 5 years would be inconsequential. The field of Information Technology grows and changes at such a rate that any decision made now would seem foolhardy within 5 years.

Make certain to understand that to promote competition for the mere sake of competition can be detrimental to what is actually in the best interest of the people. The Law doesn't make that distinction.

Thank you,  
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